

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /015 R

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DRAFTED BY ARA/AND/B DTOYRYLA

APPROVED BY MRBARNEBEY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY QUITO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LIMA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 178059

FOLLOWING REPEAT LA PAZ 5531 ACTION SECSTATE JULY 13.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 5531

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, BL

SUBJ: BOLIVIAN ELECTIONS

1. IN THE LAST 24 HOURS THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN BOLIVIA
HAS TAKEN A SHARP TURN FOR THE WORSE. THE TWO MAJOR EVENTS
OF LAST NIGHT WERE THE FOLLOWING.

A. THE ELECTORAL COURT RELEASED A NEW COUNT OF THE VOTES
IN POTOSI DEPARTMENT, WHERE HERNAN SILES HAD BEEN LEADING
BY A MARGIN OF 2 1/2 TO 1, INCREASING PEREDA'S VOTES BY OVER
50,000 AND REDUCING (SIC) SILES' VOTES BY 7000.

THIS SUSPECT NEW COUNT, IF AUTHENTICATED BY THE
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COURT, WOULD MAKE JUAN PEREDA PRESIDENT WITH OVER 50 PERCENT
OF THE POPULAR VOTE AND A MAJORITY OF THE CONGRESS.

B. THE THREE OPPOSITION PARTIES OF HERNAN SILES, VICTOR PAZ,
AND RENE BERNAL SIGNED A POLITICAL PACT PROTESTING FRAUD OF
THE GOVERNMENT AND PEREDA FORCES AGAINST ALL OF THEM AND
DECLARING THAT NONE WOULD COOPERATE WITH PEREDA IN THE

NEW CONGRESS. (SEPTTEL).

2. THE IMPLICATIONS ARE BLEAK.

AANTHE MILITARY WILL NOW LOSE THEIR PREVIOUSLY GROWING
8,5343 5 8, :3-,8,& 70 5#3 3)3:594-) 43 7)5 SINCE THIS
297)\$ 049?-?)6 075 5#3 3)3:589, 8,59 5#3 :9,&43 2#343
)3*58 5 #34,-, 8)3 , IF THE OPPOSITION PACT HOLDS, COULD
EMERGE PRESIDENT (EVEN THOUGH HE HAS NO MORE THAN
20-25 PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE).

--THE HARASSED NATIONAL ELECTORAL COURT MAY HAVE DISPAIRED
OF ANY EFFORT TO CLEAN UP THE ELECTORAL RETURNS, JUDGING
FROM ITS ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SUSPECT POTOSI RETURNS.

--PEREDA MAY BE ELECTED PRESIDENT VIA IRREGULARITIES, BUT
WILL HEAD A WEAK AND PARTIALLY DISCREDITED GOVERNMENT.

-- HE WILL FACE A BITTER, UNITED AND STRIDENT OPPOSITION
WHOSE SIZE AND FERVOR WILL BE THE RESULT OF THE GOVERN-
MENT'S OWN HAM-HANDED EFFORTS TO TILT THE ELECTIONS.

--THE PROSPECTS FOR DISORDER AND VIOLENCE HAVE INCREASED
SHARPLY.

3. IN SHORT, PEREDA, WHO WOULD HAVE WON A SIZEABLE PLURALITY
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IN CLEAN ELECTIONS AND COULD HAVE EASILY FORMED A COALITION
WITH EITHER OF HIS TWO MODERATE OPPONENTS, PAZ AND BERNAL,
HAS CLUMSILY PULLED A MORAL DEFEAT FROM THE FAWS OF NEAR-
CERTAIN VICTORY. BOLIVIAN POLITICS MAY NOW BE STARKLY
POLARIZED BETWEEN RIGHT AND LEFT, WITH NEITHER ABLE TO
GOVERN EFFECTIVELY WITHOUT REPRESSION--AN UNNECESSARY AND
DANGEROUS RESULT. BOEKER UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, ELECTION FRAUD
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE178059
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AND/B DTOYRYLA
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780289-0648
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780758/aaaabwzx.tel
Line Count: 101
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 54e40773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 08 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2001766
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOLIVIAN ELECTIONS
TAGS: PINT, BL
To: CARACAS BOGOTA MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/54e40773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014